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Commerce and the Holy Land.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED BY

WM. F. LYNCH, U. S. N.,

BEFORE THE

N. Y. KANE MONUMENT ASSOCIATION.

PHILADELPHIA:

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1860.

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FROM
THE BEQUEST OF
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1918

CORRESPONDENCE.

CAPTAIN W. F. LYNCH, U. S. N.

Dear Sir:

We believe we express the wishes of many who had the pleasure of listening to your able discourse on "The Commerce of the East and its Influence on the Great Future of the Holy Land," and of others, who were unable to be present on that occasion, by respectfully requesting you to publish the same in a way that will contribute to the adoption of measures, for further research, on the many important subjects so interestingly treated and so ably illustrated.

With much esteem,

Respectfully yours,

CHAS. KING,
CHARLES M. HURLEY,
SAMUEL F. B. MORSE,
M. J. RAPHAEL, DR.
JOHN W. FRANCIS,
H. W. BELLOWES,
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FRANCIS LIEBER,
J. P. THOMPSON,
R. B. MINTURN,
WM. H. ASPINWALL.

New York, February 13, 1860.

PRELIMINARY.

THE author, by invitation, delivered the second lecture of the course, for the benefit of "The New York Kane Monument Association."

His subject was "The Commerce of the East, and its Influence upon the Great Future of the Holy Land."

Since then, he has been honored by the preceding request of several distinguished citizens of New York, to publish that lecture.

In complying with their request, he deems it advisable to introduce a few points which were necessarily excluded by the limitations of a single discourse, and herewith presents a synthetical arrangement, as brief as he can make it, of facts and arguments drawn from every accessible and reliable source.

To cull for a lecture from materials sufficient for a number of discourses, is as difficult as to select a single shaft from a full quiver; but, in this utilitarian age the value of time, each year, increases in a geometric ratio and unless an author so writes, that he who runs

may read, and so condenses, that the reader can, without long pausing, comprehend, in all its bearings, the subject claiming his attention, he had better not write at all.

This pamphlet, sent forth at the instance of others, is accompanied with the single hope, that it may elicit a spirit of inquiry and discussion among intelligent men.

Written only for delivery, without an idea of publication, few of the authorities consulted in the preparation of the lecture were noted down, but, as far as memory serves, those not quoted in the text, are named in the "Note to the Reader," at the end.

One thing he has not dwelt upon in the text, which may, to many, be the most attractive feature—the great probability of an abundance of gold lying in the projected route across Arabia.

Rosenmüller, in his *Biblical Botany*, states that the ancient Hebrews obtained their gold chiefly from Arabia, and Strabo,¹ quoting Artemidorus, says that a river of Arabia carries gold sand in its stream, and that gold, requiring little purification, is found in small pieces, the smallest of the size of a grain of wheat, the middling as big as a meddlar, and the largest like a nut. And Diodorus Siculus² declares, that there is found in Arabia pure, native gold, of the size of a chestnut and of a brilliant lustre; and speaking of the river

¹ Lib., xvi., chap. 3, 5, 18. ² Lib., iii., chap. 125.

alluded to, he says, it conveys gold sand in such abundance, that the silt thrown up on the banks is quite radiant with it.

Genesis, chap. ii., 11, 12, tells of "the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good, there is bdellium and the onyx stone."

Schulthess, in his work on Paradise,⁸ identifies the Havilah of Genesis with the province lying opposite to the island "Awal," in the north part of the west coast of the Persian Gulf. On the maps of the Annotated Paragraph Bible, published by the London Religious Tract Society, 1855, Havilah is located as the country "El Asha," which borders the Persian Gulf on the west.

By a singular coincidence, and without the slightest reference to gold, Wady El Asha, in the text, is pointed out as the most desirable coin à fendre into Arabia.

That Ophir was a country of Arabia, is evident, from its being classed by Moses, (Gen. x., 29,) along with Havilah, among districts settled by the Sons of Joktan, which *certainly belonged to that region*; and that it lay upon the coast, is clear, from the circumstance of its having been frequented by foreign vessels.

Greek writers attest that gold was found in Arabia. (See the citations in *Bochart*, chap. 27; and *J. D. Michaelis*, Spicileg 11, p. 186;) and Seetzen refers to

⁸ pp. 81, 106, 282, 283.

an Ophir, in the Persian Gulf, mentioned by Sherif Edrisi, the Nubian geographer.

Some object to this location of Ophir, because the voyage, out and home, (1 Kings, x. 22, and II Chronicles, ix. 21 ;) occupied three years—*but that is not said of the voyages to Ophir, but only of those to Tarshish or Turtessus.*

The following poetic figure, may, ere long, be realized as a geographic fact.

“ For Thee ; Idumea’s spicy forests blow,
And seeds of gold in Ophir’s mountain’s glow.”

POPE’S MESSIAH.

COMMERCE AND THE HOLY LAND.

When, in the early ages of the world, mankind, increasing from families to tribes and from tribes to nations, spread outward from the centre of Asia until they reached its confines, as they wandered along the coast, must have gazed wistfully, at first, upon the slumbering sea; but, when the tempest came, and the waves beat against the shore, and the spray was borne inland upon the blast, they fled precipitately from the scene. But every evil has its antidote: One, devastating storm uprooted gigantic trees, which, floating upon the tranquillized surface of the ocean, suggested the means of transportation.

The art of navigation, in the beautiful mythology of the ancients ascribed to Venus and Minerva, owes its invention to Oousous the Phœnician, who, on the trunk of a tree, denuded of its branches, and partly excavated by fire, boldly pushed from the shore, and encountered the untried perils of the deep.

To the canoe succeeded the raft, and thence, in regular gradation, the galley manned with oarsmen, and the ship propelled by sails.

From skirting along the coasts, men, inured by degrees to the dangers of a new element, extended their intercourse from mainland to island, and at length, with the newly invented compass for their guide, they stood directly from the land and steered across the ocean in search of other worlds.

Such, in brief, was the origin of the art of navigation—the foster-mother of maritime commerce; a commerce, which is to the body-politic, what the circulation of blood is to the human frame.

Gifted with the mysterious principle of life, the blood issues from the heart, and diffusing vitality as it flows from the centre to the extremities, speedily returns, somewhat changed in its ingredients, but with the same life-sustaining power to re-invigorate the source from whence it sprung.

In like manner, the freighted ships of commerce go forth, dispensing the necessities and the comforts of life and return to enrich and sometimes to enlighten, the countries to which they belong.

Without commerce, neither science, nor art, nor civilization, nor religion could have spread beyond the boundaries of the places of their birth. But, instead of each hemisphere living in ignorance of the existence of the other, their prospects and their hopes are now intimately blended, and maritime commerce, the offspring of navigation, by increasing the prosperity, has cemented the interests of nations.

It is with civilization as with the magnet, it radiates influences beyond itself and, as has been well remarked, it follows in the train of commerce—and institutions securing the rights and the property of men, have grown up under its fostering influence. Aristotle, the profoundest writer of antiquity, tells us, that Carthage, which was the greatest mercantile city of his day, possessed also the most perfect institutions of the age.

The commercial intercourse of the western world with the opulent and early civilized nations of the east, has, in all ages, produced the greatest advantages to the people who have engaged in it.

That Arabia had intercourse with India, in the very dawn of history, is unquestionable, for the first commercial adventure upon record, as we read in Genesis, was conducted by an Arabian Caravan, consisting of a company of Ishmaelites "come from Gilead with their camels, bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt."

The earliest navigators of whom we read were the Phœnicians, whose first voyages were made along the coasts of the Mediterranean. Their trade, however, was not long confined

to the countries bordering its shores. Acquiring early possession of some ports on the Elantic Gulf of the Red Sea, they extended the sphere of their commerce and are represented as the first people who opened a maritime communication with India.

The territory of this extraordinary people was neither extensive, nor fertile; but its situation was favorable to the enterprising spirit of its inhabitants. It was only by trading with other nations that they could acquire either opulence or power; accordingly, the traffic carried on by the merchants of Sidon and Tyre, was extensive and adventurous and both in manners and policy, they resembled the great commercial states of modern times more than any other people of antiquity.

The commerce of these Phœnicians soon extended in an unbroken line from Britain to Ceylon, and whatever of art, or learning, was found in the broad regions between, became, by their voyages, the common property of mankind; and even the literature of Greece would have perished unknown and unregarded, if Phœnician merchantmen had never anchored in the waters of the Peloponnesus.

The trade with India, which may be regarded as the most lucrative and considerable, was soon engrossed by the Phœnicians, who, for many ages, held the undisputed monopoly, and from their harbors on the Red Sea, had regular intercourse with India on the one hand and Africa on the other. But, as the distance from the Red Sea to Tyre was considerable and rendered the land conveyance of merchandise tedious and expensive, they took possession of Rhinocolura, the modern El-Arish, the port on the Mediterranean nearest to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

All the commodities brought from India were conveyed overland to Petra and Rhinocolura by a shorter and more practicable route than the one, by which, at a subsequent period, the productions of the east were carried from the Red Sea to the Nile. At Rhinocolura, the goods were embarked to be conveyed, by easy navigation, along the coast to Tyre and thence distributed through the world.

This is the earliest route of commercial intercourse with India by sea, of which we have an authentic account, and it had so many advantages over any other known before the discovery of the passage around the Cape of Good Hope, that the Phoenicians could supply other nations with the products of India in greater abundance and at cheaper rates than any other people of antiquity.

This, for a considerable time, secured to them a monopoly of that trade and so extraordinary was the wealth acquired by individuals that it rendered "the merchants of Tyre princes and her traffickers the honorable of the earth," while the power of the state itself became so extensive, that it first taught mankind to conceive what vast resources a commercial people possess and what great exertions they are capable of making.

Three hundred and twenty-six years before the advent of our Saviour, Alexander undertook his celebrated expedition into India, for soon after his first successes in Asia, he seemed to have entertained the idea of establishing a universal monarchy and to have aspired to the dominion of the sea as well as of the land.

From the wonderful resistance which Tyre made against his arms, he conceived a high opinion of the resources of maritime power and of the wealth to be derived from commerce, especially that with India, which he found engrossed by the merchants of Tyre.

With a view to secure this commerce, as soon as he had completed the conquest of Egypt, he founded a city near the mouths of the Nile, and Alexandria, which speedily became the greatest trading city in the ancient world, and notwithstanding many revolutions in the empire, it continued, during eighteen centuries, to be the chief seat of commerce with India.

The celebrity of this mart and the immunities granted to traders of all nations, soon attracted vast numbers of foreigners and Alexandria, commanding the commerce of the east and the west, became, as I have said, the commercial emporium of the world.

But, in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the trade with India began to revive at Tyre, its ancient mart and in order to retain the lucrative monopoly, Ptolemy excavated, or re-excavated a canal between the Red Sea and the eastern branch of the Nile, by which to convey the productions of India to Alexandria, wholly by water.

When, from some cause, now unknown, the project failed, Ptolemy founded the city of Berenice on the western shore of the Red Sea, from which the products of India were conveyed, about two hundred and thirty miles, through the desert of Thebais to Coptos, from whence a canal, three miles in length, conducted to the Nile, down which they were transported to Alexandria.

During this period, the Persians were no less desirous than the nations around them, of possessing the valuable productions and rich manufactures of India. Averse to navigation, they left to the Egyptians and to the Phœnicians the monopoly of maritime communication, while they transported Indian commodities, on camels, from the banks of the Indus, to those of the Oxus and the Caspian Sea. Such were the channels of intercourse with India by sea and land while the kingdoms of Egypt and Persia continued to be governed by their own sovereigns; but they, with all their power and resources, together with the other known parts of the world, were soon to be concentrated under one government.

The active pursuits of commerce were rapidly bringing the eastern and the western worlds into closer union with each other, when the Romans appeared upon the scene and became no less desirous than the nations they subdued, of enjoying the luxuries of the east—and their taste for those luxuries increased with their power to command them.

For many ages, the products of India flowed through the channels projected by Alexander and carried out by his successors; but as they did not adequately supply the growing demands of Rome, a third route of communication was opened between Mesopotamia and other provinces on the banks of the Euphrates and those parts of Syria and Pales-

tine bordering on the Mediterranean. By this route, Abraham, upwards of two thousand years ago, journeyed "from Ur, of the Chaldees, to go, at the command of God, into the land of Canaan." Solomon, when he turned his attention to commerce, considered this route of so much importance, that he built a city in the desert of Syria, towards the Euphrates, to facilitate intercourse with the East.

Under the Romans, that city, better known by its Greek name of Palmyra, became a place of great importance and, considering the disadvantages of its situation, its opulence can only be attributed to the extent of its commerce.

The structures of that city of the desert were on a scale so magnificent and vast, that the most splendid caravansaries of the East, or commercial exchanges of the West, sink into insignificance, when compared with the Court of Camels at Palmyra; where the merchant exhibited his wares in the most spacious bazaar in the world, while in the neighbouring temple of Belus, he could tender his offerings to Baal, or his thanksgiving to Jove.

It is thus in the East, that an intimate connection exists between religion and commerce. The pilgrims to Mecca always journey with their wares, as much merchants as devotees, and in India and Persia a religious feast and a fair are correlative terms.

These modes of intercourse with the East continued, with little variation, until about the fiftieth year of the Christian era; when a discovery was made which materially shortened the voyage from the Red Sea to India.

Hitherto, small coasting vessels crept slowly along the Arabian shore, but, in the course of their voyages, the pilots did not fail to observe the regular shifting of the periodic winds, now called monsoons, which blow from the northeast and southwest, at different seasons of the year. Encouraged by this observation, Hippalus, the commander of an Egyptian vessel, relinquished the tardy and circuitous route, and boldly stretching from the foot of the Red Sea across the ocean, was

carried by the southwest monsoon, to the western coast of India.

This was the great maritime adventure of the age and the passage thus opened, continued to be the best route of communication with the East during the next fourteen centuries. This first direct voyage from the Red Sea to India was performed in forty days.

The Romans, while availing themselves of the channel thus opened, were no less active by land. The trade carried on with the East, through northern Syria, was steadily pursued and in a few years extended to the borders of China and they endeavored to make it more secure, by entering into a negotiation with one of the monarchs of that great Empire.

It is worthy of remark that this information is derived, not from Greek, or Roman, but from Chinese historians, who state that Antoun, the King of the people of the West, (the Emperor Marcus Antoninus), sent an embassy to Aunti, who reigned over China in the one hundred and sixty-sixth year of the Christian era.

The farthest point east to which the knowledge of the Romans extended, was to a town which Ptolemy (the Geographer), calls "Sera Metropolis," which about corresponds with Kant-cheou, a city of some note in Chensi, the most westerly province of the Chinese Empire.

Having endeavored to show how much the nations of antiquity prized the commerce of the East, I will call your attention to an extract from an editorial of the "London Morning Post," which is pregnant with meaning:

"The time has arrived when the sceptre of the commercial world must be grasped and held by that Power, which shall be able to maintain the most certain and rapid communication with Asia," and then proceeds to point out the course which England should pursue, to maintain her commercial supremacy. If the editor, instead of looking at the subject exclusively from an English point of view, had

called upon the civilized world to unite with England in the endeavor, to draw closer the ties which bind the friendships of nations, it would have been better. Contracted ideas have already too many partisans.

By a little examination, any one can determine the accuracy of the statistics I am about to present and many, very many, of those who examine them, are better qualified than I am, to deduce the results. The question I have to propose is, how can those results be made, and most speedily made, conducive to our national prosperity?

I will propose one mode, not with the bigoted belief that it is the best one, but in the hope of inviting attention to the subject and of eliciting a spirit of inquiry and discussion, that from the attrition of active minds there may scintillate the idea, which will prove as a torch in the hands of a labyrinthine explorer.

Let no earnest mind be deterred by diffidence, for the desired suggestion may spring from an unexpected quarter and a name, now unknown, be hereafter hailed as that of a benefactor of his country.

On one occasion, the First Napoleon, travelling with his suite, after nightfall, along the sands of the Red Sea, was overtaken and in the darkness nearly overwhelmed by the returning tide. Instead of rashly taking the lead and thereby further imperilling his companions, that Master-Genius formed his party in a circle, with their faces outwards and then gave the word for each one to move cautiously and steadily forward. By this seemingly simple, but truly wise expedient, the submerged pathway was recovered and the passage effected in safety.

In like manner, let each of us, taking the direction to which his mind shall incline him, steadfastly pursue the line of investigation it may present, and if any one can hit upon the solution, like Archimides of old, he may well cry out Eureka!

The empire of China, as geography tells us, embracing one-tenth of the land surface of the earth, contains the largest

population, and it is believed also the greatest amount of wealth, under one government, of any part of the world. Eight times the dimensions of France, it has more than twelve times its population, for by the census of 1852, the inhabitants of China exceeded 450,000,000 souls.

Like Africa, China is nowhere deeply indented by the waters of the ocean, and in like manner projects into the sea no important peninsulas; but the exuberant source of its fertility and wealth consists in the mighty rivers, by which, through its entire breadth, the empire is traversed. The two great streams, the Hoang-ho or Yellow river, and Yang-tse-Kiang, or First-born of the Ocean, have their sources in Thibet.

The Hoang-ho is bent, at first, by the frontier-mountains into a northerly course, which it pursues for several hundred miles, when it again bends and after making a circuit, fertilizes several of the finest provinces in its progress towards the Yellow Sea.

The Yang-tse-Kiang rises very near the Hoang-ho, but takes a contrary bend, until it is at one point a thousand miles distant from it; then bending northwards, after watering all the great central provinces, it flows by Nankin and with a width of forty miles, falls into the sea, less than one hundred and fifty miles south of the Hoang-ho.

In the annals of China, it is stated, that, in every epoch, each dynasty was employed in making canals, but nothing comparable to what was done by the Emperor Yang-ti, of the dynasty of Hin, who was elevated to the throne in the six hundred and fifth year of the Christian era.

The first year of his reign he was employed in making new canals and enlarging old ones, in order that boats might pass from the Hoang-ho to the Yang-tse-Kiang, and from those two great rivers into their principal tributaries.

A plan was submitted to and adopted by this sovereign, by which all the canals were made to communicate with each other, and nearly five thousand miles of canal were made or repaired. This great undertaking was successfully carried out by immense labor, apportioned among the soldiery and the inhabitants.

The canals of China are, in many places, artificial rivers, being formed by changing the direction of rivers into new channels. By the Great Canal, there is an uninterrupted communication of five hundred miles between the Peiho, or the river flowing by Pekin and the Yang-tse-Kiang. In connexion with the rivers, this canal completes, with one short interruption, a line of one thousand miles navigation between Pekin and Canton.

The three cities situated on the Yang-tse-Kiang, where it receives its chief tributary, were not over-estimated by Abbe Huc. He states the population to be 8,000,000, and says—

“The large harbor of Hankow is literally a forest of masts. One is astonished to see, in the interior of China, vessels in such numbers and of such a size. Hankow is the entrepôt of eighteen provinces; here is received and from here departs, the merchandise which supports the entire commerce of the interior.

“There is not, in the world, a city more favorably situated and by nature surrounded with greater advantages. Placed at the centre of the empire, it is almost encircled by a bend of the Y.-tse-Kiang, by which, it has direct communication with the provinces of the east and the west.

“After leaving Hankow, the river conducts the large junks of commerce towards the south, into the lakes Poyang and Tonting, which are like two interior seas. A number of rivers empty into these lakes and receive, on smaller boats, the merchandise from Hankow and spread it through all the provinces of the south.

“To the north, where the communication is less natural, it is remedied by the numerous and gigantic canals, (by which the country is intersected) and which, by a wonderful combination, connect all the navigable rivers of the empire, so that it would be easy for one to travel through all the provinces without leaving his boat.”

Chaplain Wood, U. S. N., in his account of the ascent of the Y.-tse-Kiang, by Lord Elgin, says, that the fleet passed the celebrated lake Poyang, the largest in China. There

the difficulties of navigation ceased, and nothing impeded the fleet in its ascent. That the scenery of the river above became charming and magnificent, with wooded hills and green valleys, and intermingling forests and meadows, the whole contrasting favorably with the scenery of Switzerland and Wales.

The boundless valleys, with few exceptions, were covered with a mass of verdure, under high cultivation, teeming with an untold population, crowded with towns and villages, and having cities with hundreds of thousands and even millions of inhabitants.

Thus, the vast extent of its territory, the fertility of its soil, the variety of its products, its immense and industrious population, and its facilities of communication by land and by water, all unite to render China the most commercial country in the world.

At whatever point a stranger enters China, he is struck with the restless activity of the people, under the stimulus of traffic. From north to south, from east to west, the whole country presents the appearance of a perpetual fair.

It is this people, so numerous, so industrious, so prone to traffic, who give employment to 150,000 tons of our shipping, and from whom, in 1856, we imported 40,000,000 pounds of tea, that we should endeavor, by commercial ties, to draw nearer to ourselves.

Hitherto, the balance of trade has been in their favor, and they have accumulated an immense amount of silver, but no people in the world presents so fair a field for ingrafting new wants, which we can supply from our own redundancies, and thereby not only diminish the drain upon our specie, but lessen their accumulated hoards—honestly lessen—for he who, within the moral law, introduces a new want, and he who invents the means of gratifying it, gives each a stimulus to labor, and is, commensurably, a benefactor of his race.

As significant of the great commercial movement which is going on, it is confidently stated that since the return of Lord Elgin from Hankow, coupled with the disturbances at

Canton, and the greater export facilities of Shanghai, the merchants of Canton are contemplating the transfer of their business to the banks of the Y.-tse-Kiang.

On the strength of the last treaty, several steamers have been built by Europeans in China, designed for the navigation of the inland waters. And the time is not distant, when American steamers will be running on the rivers and canals of China, to the delight of its inhabitants. The steamers on Canton river, and along the coast to Shanghai, are crowded with Celestials, and their taste for travel will increase in proportion to the facilities presented.

And while promoting the physical comforts, we may, in a greater degree, elevate the moral standard of the Chinese—for religion and commerce have ever gone hand in hand, and in the early ages of Christianity, the missionary and the merchant visited regions, where the Roman name and the Roman arms never had penetrated.

The Chinese are great readers, and nearly every one knows how to read and write. Their walls and public places are covered with proclamations with readers around them, and as a recent traveler tells us, there are teachers in every town and a school in every village, and 'literary honors, length of days and male offspring' is a Chinaman's wistful prayer.

I have spoken of the competition between Russia and England for the commerce of the East, and will glance at the efforts of those powers in the direction of China.

By railroad and canal, Nizni-Novgorod is connected with Moscow and St. Petersburg. From Novgorod, the route to Asia is by water, on the broad stream of the Volga, upon which, ply a number of steamers. The Volga empties into the Caspian Sea, which stretches seven hundred miles to the south, where it is bounded by Persia.

This inland sea is under the exclusive control of Russia, which has an armed flotilla upon it, and none other than the Russian flag can be borne on it by a ship of war.

A road, which may be called the Pacific-Rail-Road of

Russia, is under construction, which will connect Nizni-Novgorod with Irkoutsk, on Lake Baikal, on the Chinese frontier.

From the north-east extremity of that lake, flows the impetuous river Angara, a tributary of the Lena, which, through the Aldan, another tributary, admits of boat-transportation to within a short distance of the sea of Okotsk, an inlet of the Pacific Ocean.

Again, flowing into Lake Baikal from the south, and passing, in its course, the frontier-town of Kiakhta, is the river Selinga, which has its source a short distance from the head waters of the Amoor, a great river flowing through the valley of the Amoor, which is half as large as that of the Mississippi. On the Amoor, six steamers are now making regular trips above Nicolaeffsky, and by a recent ukase, Siberian Exiles are permitted to emigrate to the valley of the Amoor for settlement.

The Russian has surveyed and is about constructing a railroad from a contingent bend in the Amoor, to Castries Bay in the Gulf of Tartary. This Gulf of Tartary, through the straits of Corea, is connected with the Yellow Sea, into which empty the rivers that flow through the heart of China, and have Peking, and Nankin, and other populous cities upon their banks.

Thus, with his furs, hemp, leather, soap, tallow, coarse woollens and imported tobacco now, and hereafter with provisions and finer manufactured fabrics, the Emperor of Russia is no mean competitor for the Chinese trade.

But, while Russia comes down from the north, England, true to her commercial instincts, hurries up from the south. In her avidity for the trade of Farther-India and China, she has planted her flag-staff in the Straits of Malacca, one of the most frequented gates of the China Sea, and made a mart of Singapore, the grand central station and half-way house between Calcutta and Canton—an island, which, not long since the resort of a few Malay fishermen, now contains 80,000 inhabitants.

She also claims sovereignty over a part of the magnificent

island of Borneo, which guards the eastern, as Singapore does the south-western entrance of the China Sea; and Hong-Kong, at the entrance of Canton river, is a part of the British domain.

With her fleet, she has ascended the Yang-tse-Kiang to Hankow, and in all probability her ships will force the Peiho and dictate terms abreast of Pekin.

Facts are more convincing than phrases, and as illustrative of her success in monopolizing the river-trade of Canton, the official report of our Consul at Hong-Kong states, that in the year 1854, there were two hundred and sixty *entries** at that port of steamers plying on Canton river, of which, two were American and the remainder English. In that year ten new steamers were added.

In the rivalry between these two great powers, our sympathies should be with England, for, in her efforts to break down the commercial restrictions of China, she has sought no immunities for herself, but claimed and obtained an equal participation for all.

The exponent and the champion of a commercial necessity, she shares among her more scrupulous, or more timid contemporaries, the advantages purchased by her treasure and blood.

Besides, Russia interferes not alone with England, but has begun to exclude us from a market, which was recently opened by our enterprising countrymen; a market, the trade of which in 1858, Mr. Pickens, our Minister to Russia, estimated at \$30,000,000.

Scarcely had the Providence Journal published the letter of its correspondent, on the banks of the Amoor, giving a glowing account of the prospects of trade with Mantchooria, when the commercial activity it awakened, was checked by the annunciation of an interdict, prohibiting any, but Russian subjects, from trading beyond Sophinsk; which is but 200 miles above Nicolaeffsky.

It is unfortunate that our Government did not, by treaty, secure commercial privileges, as regards Mantchooria, before

*Entries in the aggregate of steamers plying on the river.

that province was annexed by Russia. The neglect was a deliberate one, for, in 1853, it was advised of the commercial importance of that country to us, and of the designs of Russia upon it.

Before glancing at the commercial resources of India, it may be worth while to note the approaches which Russia is making towards that magnificent domain.

The territory seized by Russia during the last 15 years, principally south and east of the Caspian Sea, is more extensive than Great-Britain, France, Turkey in Europe and all Germany, including Austria, put together.

She has connected the Caspian Sea with the Baltic, by means of a canal, between the rivers Svrtza and Msta, at Veshnei-Voloksk, (the length of the navigation of rivers and canals, being 3000 miles);—and by canal, between the Don and the Volga, she connects the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, with the Sea of Azof, and the Caspian Sea.

By the improvement of the navigation of the river Araxes she has placed herself in striking distance of Erzeroun, situated on the head waters of the Euphrates, and—

By lines of Cossack settlements around the wells, dug by the late Czar, between the Caspian and the Aral Seas, the foundation has been laid for connecting Balk on the Oxus, which empties into the Aral Sea, with Cabul, on the principal tributary of the Indus. Thus, some future Czar, may cross the desert to Herat, or like Alexander the Great before him, descend the Indus with his fleet.

In every age, India, we are told, has been the seat of oriental pomp, of an early and peculiar civilization, and of a commerce supported by richer products than any other country, ancient or modern. Every thing is upon the grandest scale her mountains are the loftiest; her plains, except our own, the most extensive; her valleys the most fruitful in the world.

From the range of Himmalaya, a magazine of tempests and snow, there pours down a world of waters, which unite in the three great streams, the Brahmapootra flowing through the tea-country of Assam; the Ganges with its hundred outlets, and

the Indus pouring into the Arabian Sea a volume of water four times greater than the Ganges.

Few have an idea of the wealth and resources of Hindostan. Watered by those mighty rivers, embracing an area of two and a quarter millions of square miles, and containing one hundred and sixty millions of inhabitants—years ago, the annual value of its products exceeded \$20,000,000,000.

Its immense traffic may be conceived from the fact, that, in 1852, 669 merchant vessels were built upon its western coast, and the tonnage of vessels trading upon that coast, amounted to nearly 900,000, while 300,000 men were employed in the navigation of the Ganges.

Calcutta gives employment to upwards of one hundred pilots: At all hours of the day, steam-tug after steam-tug may be seen, each with one, two, or three deeply laden merchantmen, towing out to sea, and in 1856, seventy American clippers were, at one time, lying in that port.

The Oriental Steamship Company has forty powerful steamers, averaging 1300 tons each, and the annual receipts of the Company are \$7,500,000.

We have all heard of the 'Great-Eastern,' and most have supposed that her dimensions are unsurpassed, yet, two vessels, longer than her, were last year built in Liverpool. They are each 700 feet long, and are intended for the navigation of the rivers of India.

All parts of India are in telegraphic communication with each other, and seven railway companies have completed, or are engaged in surveying and constructing 12,000 miles of railroad under the guaranty of the Government, at an estimated cost of \$200,000,000, and with its rivers and its extremities connected by canals, one of them, the 'Grand Ganges,' ten feet deep, 140 feet wide, and 898 miles in length;—possessing such resources and facilities, and yielding a revenue of over \$135,000,000,—at what may we not estimate our future commerce with that country, if two great objects can be obtained—a more direct and speedy route and the removal of the dif-

ferential duties on our manufactures,—a commerce, which, by the last alone, would be more than quadrupled.

New markets of immense extent are now being opened, at a time too, when all existing markets are glutted by a manufacturing skill, which possesses a faculty of supply exceeding every present demand, and requiring just such consumers as China and India and Persia are bringing forward—consumers whose wants are capable, in the words of one of our distinguished* men, of doubling the clatter of every loom, and the ring of every anvil in Europe and America.

We should not only aim to secure marts for our products, but to become, as with our faster-sailing and more energetically-commanded merchant ships we are well fitted to become, the carriers of Europe. As far back as 1836, the *Encyclopedia of Geography* stated that the trade in Mocha coffee, about 5,000,000 lbs., which, for a long time, was engrossed by the English, had been “monopolized by the active rivalry of the Americans, who, although they paid a higher price for the commodity, bring it to Europe thirty per cent. cheaper.”

We have all heard of the steamer “*Spread Eagle*,” having recently ascended the Missouri, upwards of 3000 miles, to within a comparatively short distance of the navigable waters of Columbia river, and at the last accounts, a wagon-road from stream to stream was nearly completed. How long will it be before that wagon-road will be superseded by a rail-road? And how long thereafter, before the Missouri will be the great traffic-transportation route to the Pacific?

Now, let us turn to the East. The Y.-tse-Kiang, the great river of China, which rises near, and if recent maps be correct, very near, the head-waters of the Irawady and the Pegu, which, flowing south through Siam and Burmah, almost interlace with the Brahmapootra, that empties in the Bay of Bengal, side by side with the Ganges, the N. W. sources of which, are overlapped by those of the Indus, that flows into the Arabian Sea, 600 miles from the Gulf of Persia.

* Hon. J. H. B. Latrobe, of Baltimore.

Hundreds of steamers, in the aggregate, are now plying upon the Irawady, the Ganges and the Indus. The Y.-tse-Kiang, with the other rivers of China, being opened to navigation by the recent treaty, the clumsy junks will soon give way to steamers, and when that takes place, the travel on our Mississippi boats, is small compared to what it will be in China.

But, as a transit of goods, it will be yet more important. The calculation is, that the transportation of tea from the interior to the coast, costs now four cents per lb.; it will then cost scarce $\frac{1}{4}$ of a cent per pound for the same distance, and the like proportion holds with silk.

But the substitution of steam for canvass, as a means of transportation, and of overland-cuts for long sea-circuits, has become the ruling principle of this commercial age.

If the Y.-tse-Kiang be navigable as far as represented, how long will it be before produce, instead of descending, will ascend it, the Irawady and the Pegu, and crossing to the nearest navigable waters of India, descend into the Bay of Bengal or the Arabian Sea? Exploration alone can answer this question.

The Persian-Gulf, an inlet of the Indian-Ocean, situated midway between the South-Atlantic and the Pacific; 1200 miles from the Red Sea on one side, and 600 from the mouth of the Indus on the other, penetrates upwards of 400 miles into Arabia and Persia, and at its head, receives the united waters of the Tigris and the Euphrates, which flow through nearly the entire length of the continent of Asia.

This Gulf, the highway which nature has prepared for the admission of sea-faring nations into the interior of Asia, was, in former times, enriched by trade with India, Persia and Arabia, to an almost fabulous extent.

The city of Gherra, the modern Grane, situated on its north-west shore, with a harbor as deep and as capacious as that of New York, became the emporium of that trade, and into it was poured the incense, ivory, ebony, frankincense and cinnamon of Arabia; the choicest pearls from the Bohrein-

Islands; dyes and precious stones, especially jaspers and emeralds, from the desert of Cobi; wool from Candahar and Cashmere; cotton and flax from India, and crapes and silks from China—all had their centre of distribution at Grane.

Agatharcides tells us that the Phenicians found their way to this coast through the desert of Arabia, and that Tyre received from the Persian-Gulf, ivory, ebony and cinnamon. How did they get to these shores? Circuitously? Or, from the Mediterranean, direct across the desert? Here we have something to re-discover.

Now, let us trace upon the map, the line from London to Sydney: Observe, it passes Strasburg, Trieste, Constantinople, Alexandretta, and through the Persian Gulf to Batavia. At Strasburg, by the Rhine, it connects France, commercially, with Switzerland, Holland and Belgium: Trieste unites Austria and all Germany, with Italy and the ports of the Mediterranean; and Batavia, unites India with China and Australia—thus, we have England, France, Germany, Turkey, India, China, and Australia peaceably cemented by commerce.

Early last October, it was announced, that the telegraph-cable, to be laid from Aden in Arabia to Kurrachee, at the mouth of the Indus, had been despatched from Liverpool, and was expected to be in readiness by the middle of January; and now, telegraphic communication between England and India, is doubtless complete.

And to complete railway-communication between the two countries, now requires only 500 miles from Belgrade to Constantinople, and 1300 from Constantinople to Korna; but, it is fair to say, that impediments, of which I will presently speak, render it very improbable whether the last line can be completed—and if completed, it will only answer for mail and passenger-transportation to and from India: Merchandise will require a cheaper and less complicated route.

The concentrating point of Indian and Chino-Indian trade will be Kurrachee, which promises to become to the modern world, what Alexandria was to the ancient one.

Kurrachee, the ancient Port Corcola, from which Nearchus sailed in his expedition up the Persian Gulf, has been selected by England as the entrepot of her commerce with the East.

This commerce, concentrating first at Kurrachee, on its way to Europe, must ascend the Persian Gulf; but, when it reaches its head, the question arises—Shall it continue up the circuitous and shifting channel of the Euphrates, and cross from its head waters to the Mediterranean? Or, diverging to the left, be disembarked at Grane, and crossing Arabia in a direct line, be re-embarked at El-Arish, or Jaffa, for London, Liverpool, or New York.

The Persian-Gulf becoming the centre of eastern trade, why is not Grane, so favorably situated on its western shore, a great commercial mart—by connection with which, New-York can be brought as near to that centre, as San Francisco is to Shanghai? Because we know so little of the country between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. Because, we have too long looked to sailing vessels to convey their freights around the stormy capes of two continents, with the idea that to break their cargoes would be expensive, forgetting that large cargoes enrich the termini of a route, while the intermediate space remains impoverished.

We have begun to shorten these long, oceanic routes by the use of steam and proposed canals at Suez and Darien and Nicaragua. Shall we stop here? Shall we wait with folded arms, while, for short-sighted, political purposes, England opposes France in her Egyptian Canal, and France opposes England in her Syrian Railway? Two great enterprises, which, if carried out, would do more for humanity, than any that have been devised in our enlightened age.

True, in this country, we have neither the capital, nor the disposition to embark in large foreign undertakings; but, can we not explore and open up a new channel? Or, give to the old one a new and more profitable direction? When, like the removal of a dam from pent up waters, the tide will rush through the sluice and cause as great a change in the inter-

course of nations, as was effected by Vasco de Gama's discovery of a water route to India—and a greater change to us, for the result will be the turning of the channels of commerce end for end, and the outpouring of its treasures upon our shores.

Let us look at this matter unbiassed by predilection and undeterred by difficulties—difficulties, which, like spectres in a fog, became common-place on a near approach, and instead of folding our hands and waiting for the fool's to-morrow, let us examine the subject at once, and if convinced, sustain the American character for energetic promptitude.

How can we most successfully tap the commerce of the East? By the eastern or the western route? This is the important question.

Should Kurrachee become the European port of India, as eminent statesmen and commercial men believe it will become, there can be no question as to the shortest route to India, and a glance at the map will show the absurdity of the idea that Europe must transport her Chinese trade across our continent from San Francisco—for, even if the western route were adopted, the merchandise would go direct to Europe from Panama.

- From London to Panama, including the Isthmus Rail
Road, 47 miles, is.....4900 miles.
- From London to San Francisco via New York, including
2300 miles *direct* land route, is.....5400 miles.

Undoubtedly a steam line must be established from San Francisco to Japan and China. Such a line, in connection with a Pacific Rail-Road, which has become a necessity of the age, will draw to it, not only the correspondence and travel of our own country, but also that of Great Britain and most of the continent of Europe. Letters from Europe, in ten, or twelve days after date, can be telegraphed from New York, or Boston, to San Francisco, and thence transmitted by steam to Japan, or China.

Neither the projected English route through the frozen regions of the north, nor any other route, can compete with a

Pacific Rail-Road through our territory—which, will soon support itself, by passenger-traffic and the transportation of the mails; but, for the transportation of merchandise to and from India, China and Japan, a shorter and less expensive route becomes necessary.

Assuming even, that the contemplated change in the channels of commerce does not take place, and that the exports of China must seek the Pacific coast for shipment, and selecting Shanghai as the principal mart, let us look to the measurements.

From London to Shanghai, air line east.....	5760 miles.
From London to Shanghai, air line west.....	15100 miles.
From London to Shanghai via the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and Singapore.....	9790
From London to Shanghai via Panama and Tahiti.....	15170

By the eastern route the railroad transportation is 264 miles; by Panama 47 miles, making the latter route 217 less by land, but 4620 more by water. This is for the Chinese trade, while for the India trade, the water difference would be more than doubled.

Towards Australia, the measurements show,

From London to Sydney, air line east.....	8400 miles.
From London to Sydney, air line west.....	*9900 miles,

a difference of 1500 miles—but, even that of little importance, as the Australian trade must be drawn into the current of the Indian trade.

While the present communication between the countries bordering on the Atlantic and those upon the Indian-Ocean and the Pacific, by the Isthmus of Panama and the Isthmus of Suez, is fast expanding every avenue of trade, a more direct and more expeditious route, would multiply tenfold, the resources and the wealth of the commercial nations of the west.

Such a line is proposed and three routes have been suggested—the two last by our own countrymen. One, along the valley of the Euphrates; one, from the bay of Acre, through the valley of Esdraelon, across the Jordan and up

* Geographical.

the valley of the Yermak ; and one from Jaffa, or El-Arish, to Grane.

Setting aside the opposition of France, and apart from the greater length of the first line, in consequence of the Arabs having neglected, for many years, to keep the embankments, of the Euphrates in repair, the country, for hundreds of miles, is overflowed and covered with extensive shallow lakes: This is the physical change, along that route, to which I have alluded.

The second route, longer than the third, passes through a country wholly unknown. The third, which, for the most part, traverses also a terra incognita, is worthy of attention, as the shortest and most direct—presenting but 800 miles land transportation between the Mediterranean and the Persian-Gulf.

Of this last route, we are well acquainted with one-eighth the distance, that which lies between the Mediterranean and the southern extremity of the Dead Sea.

The most recent map of Steifer & Berghaus, of Gotha, represent the Wady el-Safieh, under the name of El-Asha, as coming down fifty miles from the interior.

In Arabic, the names of things are usually significant of their qualities—thus, the interpretation of the Arabic word Asha, means “ground where water is received and retained beneath the surface”; while the literal interpretation of the Hebrew name of that locality, is “Brook of the Willows.”

This Wady Safieh, is the most luxuriant ravine which opens upon the Dead Sea, and from the fertility of its appearance when the American Expedition saw it, and the favorable accounts the Arabs gave of it, I was anxious (and Dr. Anderson, the Geologist of the expedition, yet more anxious than I,) to examine it; but the physical prostration of our party compelled us to forego the visit.

The same map of Steifer's represents a road running 350 miles east from the head of W. el Asha, to Kalat el Asha, Castle of Asha, more than half-way to the Persian-Gulf.

In another direction, 150 miles east of the Dead Sea, is the

pool, or, cistern N'am el Allah; and 120 miles south-east from N'am el Allah, is Ain um Salim, (Fountain of Peace,) making 270 miles, or more than one-third the distance across.

On the other side, 200 miles north-west from Grane, is marked the well, dug by order of Melek Shah, which is ten feet wide and eight hundred deep.

These are set down by the best geographers of the day, from the most reliable sources of information; but, it is fair to say, that what we *positively* know, beyond the outlet of Wady Safieh, is comprised in the word *nothing*: It is a blank upon our maps, a blot upon the intelligence of the nineteenth century, and we must consult Strabo and Herodotus respecting it, and seek, in Pliny, the direction of the Roman-Road which traversed it.

It has been too much the custom of geographers to regard all unknown regions as desert. *Omne ignotum pro deserto* seems to be a notion as common to geography, as to other sciences. Blank expanses on maps, we are apt to look upon as uninhabitable solitudes, forgetting, that the ignorance of the map-maker may have as much to do with the matter, as the want of population, or fertility, in the region itself. In this way, we have been accustomed to regard the interior of Africa as an expanse of sand, but, the recent explorations of Dr. Livingstone show it to be, in many parts, one of the most luxuriant regions of the earth.

Arabia-Deserta is not a desert, in the common acceptation of the term; for, thus much, at least, we know, that after rains, its surface is covered with flower-bearing shrubs, and it becomes, for a season, the great pasture-ground of the Southern tribes. The soil is not hard, and water being found at a moderate depth, it was the practice of the patriarchs to dig for wells, wherever they encamped.

I have mentioned the wells dug by the late Emperor Nicholas, in the desert of Tartary, and recently, we learn, that the success of the French Engineers, in boring artesian-wells in the Desert of Sahara, bordering Algiers, has been productive of the happiest results in the government of that colony—the

Arabs revering those Engineers almost as demi-gods ; and Galignani's Messenger states—that 'the boring of those wells in Sahara is taking place on an extensive scale.'

And, if we could only strike the line of wells dug by the Queen of Haroun al Raschid, which marked each day's-journey of the great pilgrim-caravan from Bagdad, across the desert, we should probably find the most feasible route.

The eastern nations, including the Arabs, are predisposed to traffic, and the pilgrimages formed a commercial link between Asia and Africa ; for the numerous devotees did not scruple to combine traffic with piety, and each calculated to make, at least, the expenses of his journey.

In the remote town of Kerak, over the crest of the mountains of Moab, the American Expedition saw English muslins offered for sale, and in the bazaars of Damascus, similar fabrics, with counterfeit American stamps upon them, were exhibited, for, in the East, our cotton manufactures are more highly valued than the English.

The character of the Arab is generally misunderstood. He roams, for necessity compels him and the annual recurrence of the necessity has formed a habit. But those who know him believe, that with sufficient inducement, he would become settled in his habitation ; not all at once, but as he felt the comforts of civilization gathering around him. His first necessity is water, and that supplied, his tendency to roam abates. Witness what is now taking place in Sahara, to which I have alluded.

Mr. Loftus, in his "Oriental Researches," says of the Arabs, that there is not a more industrious race throughout the Turkish empire. Mr. Layard, the explorer of the ruins of Nineveh, on several occasions, remarked how cheerfully the Arab works, even as an ordinary laborer, when his feelings and his prejudices are respected by his employer ; and my experience, with one exception, would justify me in saying, that by decision, tempered with kindness, these sons of the desert may be guided like children.

We must begin with the civilization of the little thought

of Bedawin, the possessors and rulers of so much of Asia, and whose past history is such a brilliant one.

Besides the immense acquisitions of their ancestors by conquest in Asia, they subdued Egypt, and the most fertile provinces of Spain, as well as the southern, the northeastern, and northwestern shores of the Mediterranean, and nearly converted that sea into an Arabian lake. The descendants of such a race are worthy of an effort to redeem them, and it is, probably, because they have no settled abode, that they have not been visited by the missionary.

In all probability, the Jew is destined to be the first agent in the civilization of the Arab, and the Jewish villages scattered throughout Arabia, may yet initiate the trade which will effect the desired change.

These Jewish settlements are in constant communication with each other: The families are usually stationary, but the men are continually moving about in a commercial capacity, and the same individual will travel through extensive districts, so, that when any thing interesting to the Jewish people takes place, the rumor will pass rapidly throughout Asia.

On the shore of Galilee, the American Expedition met a Jewish goldsmith journeying, alone and fearlessly, to the dreaded Hauran, far east of the Jordan, and he said that the wives and daughters of the Arab Shiekhs, were his best customers.

We know that after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews became very numerous in Arabia; but, what their present condition is, and how far they influence the trade of that country, we do *not* know. Here, this is less to be said and more to be discovered.

I have said that between Wady Safieh and the Gulf of Persia we know nothing positively, but, there is a point, certain as to its existence, but uncertain as to its precise locality, the discovery of which, in an exploration, would be important, first, as a goal to be reached, and then as a pivot for future operations. I allude to the seven villages, El Jof, which are diversely

placed on the maps, by some east of the Dead Sea, by others to the north of it.

The highland east of the Jordan, with its park-like scenery and deserted cities, would seem, from over-crowded Europe, to invite colonization on a large scale.

These ruined cities are of vast extent and no where, are there more manifest proofs of former wealth and luxury. The massive walls and colossal stone doors of the private dwellings, are the memorials of a race of giants that has been extinct for more than three thousand years and form the only specimens, the world can afford, of the ordinary private dwellings of remote antiquity. Here houses only want inhabitants—and to begin to trade in such a locality—who can tell the effect upon the neighboring tribes?

It has been truly said that Geography is indebted to the wars and the commerce of nations, and it may also be added, to the zeal and the energy of individuals. Men, intent on the objects of their ambition, are as unconscious as the winds that blow, of the subserviency of their exertions to the Almighty's designs. These ruined cities are discovered just as a lodgment, such as they will afford, is required, in the re-discovery of the unknown countries on the borders of which they lie.

Among the ruins, are found inscriptions of Roman legions, which were stationed among them and no doubt, further exploration will discover a continuous Roman road through the desert and if it trend not far from the East in its course, the present question will be affirmatively solved; and the direct route to the Persian Gulf once established, it will become the channel of communication between the East and the West, through which the trade with Asia must forever flow.

No revolution in the commercial intercourse of nations has been sudden and complete. The old runs into the new and the new overlaps the old and, as it were, interpenetrate each other. By slow degrees, Alexandria supplanted Tyre as an emporium and there were many advocates of the Egyptian

route, long after the discovery of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope.

In like manner, the oar of the galley was superceded by canvass, and canvass is now, reluctantly with us, but in Europe rapidly giving way to steam. Alfred Larsing & Co.'s London Circular states—that from 1850 to 1858, the registered sailing-tonnage of Great Britain exhibited an increase of only 30 per cent., while for the same period, the increase of the registered steam-tonnage amounted to 264 per cent.

And in all but oceanic routes, steam, or the different appliances of steam, are competing for the prize; and the paddle wheel and the propeller on the one side, are arrayed against the locomotive on the other. That the locomotive will triumph in the end, may be inferred from two significant facts. On the 3d of October last, three thousand bales of cotton were sent by railroad, from Cairo, at the junction of the Ohio and the Mississippi, to western New York; and during the last cotton season, that is from September 1858, to September 1859, eighty thousand bales of cotton were conveyed inland to the Eastern States. I cite these facts to show one of the phases of the coming revolution in trade.

For oceanic routes, canvass must invite the aid of steam as an auxiliary, or give place to it altogether. There is no alternative. The circumstance that clipper-ships, have, on a few occasions, outstripped steamers in the passage to Australia, amounts to nothing, even if the days of clipper-ships were not already numbered. *Those steamers failed from want of steam*, and were compelled to diverge from their course to replenish fuel, thus losing from twelve to twenty days. But a class of steamers, initiated by the Great Eastern, (but more faithfully and less expensively built), will carry sufficient fuel for the entire voyage, when, from authentic data, the time of passage to Australia will rather fall short of than exceed, thirty-five days,—while the most strenuous advocate of the clipper has not claimed less than sixty.

The necessary consequence of shortening time in a journey, is the greater augmentation of travel and traffic upon that

route and the imports into Australia, which, as far back as 1853, were upwards of \$70,000,000 per annum, with its steadily increasing exports of gold, which already amounted to \$60,000,000 per annum, will give employment to the largest steamers as rapidly as they can be put upon the line.

Returning to the East,—apart from the necessity under which England lies of a more direct and expeditious route to it, the wants of the world's commerce imperatively require it. When it is opened, few can foresee its effects upon the Holy Land; few are aware of the reviving energy of that interesting quarter of the world.

In 1848, when the American expedition was at Beirut, the population of that town was 15,000: in 1858, the Rev'd Mr. Thomson, the author of one of the most reliable books on the East which has ever been published, stated that the number had increased to 50,000.

With that place, which is the seaport of Damascus, our commerce is steadily increasing, and presents a singular feature—some time ago, the "Savannah Republican," stated that the Schooner "Forest Belle" was taking in lumber at that port for Beirut, in Syria; so that, as the cedars of Lebanon disappear, their places will be supplied by the pines of Georgia. Last summer, an omnibus, that modern index of civilization, made its first appearance in Beirut, and in all probability, the turban of a Turk, and the tarboush of a Syrian, the conical cap of a Jew, and the round hat of a European Christian have, this very day, jostled together in an omnibus, as it rumbled along the uneven streets of that thriving city.

This year, there were, at one time, ten thousand pilgrims in Jerusalem and four large steamers were lying in its port of Jaffa and several others expected—a thing unheard of before.

A recent number of the "Boston Traveller" states, on the authority of its Syrian correspondent, that Jerusalem is making rapid strides of late; that large buildings are rising in every direction, and thousands of Russians and Jews are becoming residents of the place.

Some years ago, Professor Robinson of New York, who has a world-wide reputation, said, that "before another half-century shall have rolled away, there will be seen revolutions in the oriental mind and the world, of which no one has now any foreboding."

In Jerusalem, the fanaticism of the Turks is fast subsiding with the diminution of their number, while the Christian and Jewish population is increasing. Heretofore, the country, traversed by nomadic tribes, and cultivated only in patches, has been as insecure as it was unproductive. But the present Pasha has erected thirty block-houses for the protection of the merchant and the traveller.

The Mahommedan rule is fast losing the fierce energy which was so long its characteristic, and it needs but the destruction, for the enlightenment of that power to ensure the restoration of the Jews to Palestine.

The increase of toleration, the assimilation of creeds, the unanimity with which all works of charity are undertaken, prove to the observing mind that before long, with every other vestige of bigotry, the prejudices against the Hebrew race will be obliterated by a God-like charity.

Since the close of the Crimean war, all religions are tolerated by the Turkish Government, and many Protestant Associations throughout christendom, are now co-operating with the Jews to effect their restoration.

"These things, all working in the line of the Hebrews' intense desire, must result in mighty consequences. They are the preliminaries of a second Jewish exodus.

"The Jews restored to Palestine, and Palestine made the thoroughfare of the world's commerce with the East, and the future of the people will be more momentous than any in their past history."*

And even if coming events did not point to the Holy Land as the connecting link between the East and the West, a glance at the map will show that it is the geographical centre of the of the united continents of the earth.

* Rev. J. Seis.

It has been well said that it is a land so remarkably situated, that it forms a bridge between two continents, and a gateway to a third. Were the population and wealth of Europe, Asia and Africa condensed to a single point, Palestine would be the centre of their common gravity and with the amazing facilities of modern intercourse and the prodigious extent of modern commerce, who can estimate the commercial grandeur to which a country may attain, planted, as it were, on the very apex of the old world, with its three continents spread out beneath it, having the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf on one side, to bring it the golden treasures and the spicy harvests of the East, and the Mediterranean floating in on the other, the skill and knowledge and enterprise of the West?

‘For the sake of higher ends, it seems to be the purpose of the Almighty, to make Palestine a mart of all nations, and by bringing the forces of the Gentiles to Jerusalem, to send the blessing of Abraham over all the earth.’

‘Beyond doubt this is to be, and in the 18th and closing verses of Isaiah, we seem to be specifically called upon to promote it. We there read of a great maritime power spreading wide its wings, existing somewhere in the Far West from Palestine. This power, accustomed to send messengers by sea is to become interested in behalf of the Jews, and to render them its assistance.’*

Shall we be true to ourselves and accelerate that event? Or, shall we supinely wait, while France and England quarrel, each for its almost exclusive route? Or, shall we discover for them an intermediate one,—one leading through a territory where the Sultan is powerless, and where, by consequence, juggling diplomacy will be unavailing?

A route, which, equidistant from the other two, is divested of the political jealousy which attends them both, and where the representatives of the West may harmoniously meet and remove the barrier to the regeneration of the East.

Against that barrier the tide of commerce chafes—remove it and deep and full the stream will flow at once.

* Rev. J. Seis.

And more than all—far beyond all—Civilization will be introduced, and Christianity, the hand-maid of Civilization, will dispense its blessings upon the benighted nations in its path.

The first step in this great work is exploration, and they who by encouraging it, remove the obstruction to Commerce, Civilization and Christianity will become the benefactors of mankind—and the grateful pen of history will record the names of those, who, each greater than a Hercules, assisted in opening the way to gardens, fairer than those of the Hesperides.

NOTE TO THE READER.

THIS Publication has been delayed by the advice of friends who had kindly contributed the result of their researches. It was intended to annex copies, with descriptions of the large maps, which were used on the occasion of the delivery of this lecture. But, it was found impossible to make these additions without enlarging the brochure to an unusual size.

Besides, the commercial aspect of the question of the East, particularly the Holy Land, and various minor topics, those researches contain much on the products and the caravan trade of Syria and Arabia; on the climatology of the latter, more particularly of certain mountain-ranges, clothed with an atmosphere, not only pure, dry, and surcharged with electricity, but furnishing, it is believed, peculiarly invigorating and sanative qualities. These items pertain to subjects of highest scientific interest, which, in the future, may contribute much towards the prolongation of life and the banishment of diseases, still, with us incurable; easy access to certain climates it should be remembered, is better than all the charities connected with hospitals abroad. There are other results, too little thought of, or imperfectly comprehended.

It has been well said, that "colonization seems to have been God's chosen instrumentality to civilize the nations of the earth. It carried arts and letters from Phenicia to Greece; from Greece to Rome; from Rome to Britain; from Britain to America;" and history may yet record the reflux of the tide from America back to Asia.

A partial, commercial restoration of the Jewish nation in some common centre, say the villages El Jof, would soon lead to a change in the caravan routes, and possibly to a Jewish representation of many nations, which would tend to an immense increase of trade.

The great barriers to commercial civilization, especially that of the Holy Land, would then speedily give way; but to effect this requires a reconnoissance as much as did those trunk-railways of India, the completion of which, is now guarantied by a capital of \$200,000,000.

The intelligent reader of travels is often reminded, how much remains to be done, in mapping out the remote regions of the earth. This, a work which should be undertaken by the scientific societies of civilized nations, in order that they may influence their respective governments. The nineteenth century will have much to do, as well as to boast of, if, at the close of 1861, the great arterial railroads of India shall be completed, opening up the whole country to the seaboard, and making Kurrachee, on the approach to the Persian Gulf, the great maritime depôt of Europe. It may therefore safely be said, that the United States has also something to look after in the East, in the vicinity of the Mediterranean Sea.

The influence of united Europe, as well of the United States, should be given to a subject which tends to enrich and benefit every nation. The intelligence of the age must admit, that, to increase such knowledge, will most speedily improve the condition of humanity. Soon, therefore, all will feel the necessity of exploration, especially in sections of Syria and Arabia, which were so well known to nations that have passed away.

By increasing the trade of our Atlantic and Pacific coasts with the East, in the most direct lines, we can both *support and make profitable*, as well as build a Pacific Railroad. We are familiar with the expedition sent out, a few years since, by the governments of England, France and the United States, to survey a portion of Central America. Would it not be gratifying, if, at least, Syria Deserta would be explored under similar auspices?

The portions of the Holy Land where our government has successfully made surveys, are in the immediate vicinity of the sections now of such great interest to the merchant, as well as the religious teacher.

The great importance of scientific exploration is much thought of, particularly since the discoveries, in such abundance, of the precious metals, because indicating the mighty changes which have taken place through their instrumentality; among others, the mingling with us, on our Pacific border, of the representatives of the

vast populations of the unchristianized and comparatively little known portions of the earth.

The recent loss of life, as connected with the ratification of international treaties of European nations with China, arising entirely from a want of geographical knowledge of a single river, compels us to admit, that more information is needed of the former routes of commerce, in order to form a correct idea of their future direction. This involves that interesting topic, the absorption of the precious metals by the nations of the East, and the tax they have imposed on our outside humanity.

Geography—and scripture, which includes prophecy, do now, in part, explain, and may yet throw more light upon each other, when the countries east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, are better known, and appear as something more than blanks upon our maps.

The late researches of Graham and Wetzstein, will, we hope, be soon followed by others, until, not only the great discoveries in Trachonitis and the Hauran, but the sections to the south and east of them may become known. The exploration of the *Ruhbe*, *the most fruitful part of Syria, watered by four streams*; the hundreds of uninhabited cities and villages; the mystery connected with numberless inscriptions; the splendor of the architecture of the dwellings, and the substantial character and unknown extent of the Roman roads, are subjects of profound and growing interest.

The bold idea of a road through the desert is as old as the Prophet Isaiah. Lord Lindsay was astonished at what the Romans achieved, and Wetzstein's, the latest map of the country east of the Jordan, includes another road through Wady Sirhan. It may be asked: What was its object? Where did it terminate? The answer to the first is easy; the second remains *the question* to be solved.

The past and future boundaries of the Holy Land, as described in Keith's "Land of Israel," may have connection with some remarkable verses in the book of Isaiah. The following *literal* translation by learned authority, including the Rev. M. J. Raphall, Ph. D., is given for the sake of eliciting inquiry.

Chap. xl. 3. "A voice calleth: Clear a road for the Lord in the wilderness; straighten an highway through the waste plain for our God."

Chap. xliii. 19. "Behold, I am making something new, and even

now it shall spring forth. Will ye not recognize it? I will place a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

Among the many books and authors from whom information is drawn, are, Dr. Neumann's "*Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erd Kunde*," for August and September, 1859; the late numbers of the *Journals of the Royal (London) and other Geographical Societies of Europe*; "*the Commerce of India*," by Irving; "*Arabie par M. Noel Desvergers*;" the masterly works of Ritter, Robinson, Wilson, Welsted, Wallin, Burton, Lindsay, Porter, Seis, and other recent authors, with their interesting and reliable facts.

If space permitted, the importance of many localities, such as that portion of Arabia called Nejd, especially its *attractive and fruitful oases*, including the Shammar Mountains; the villages El Jof, (certainly a great centre for the interior trade of Arabia,) the Palus Sirbonis of the old geographers, the last, as easily restored perhaps, as might be the harbor of Jaffa, recently examined by J. T. Barclay, of Jerusalem. Besides, there is the country El Asha, "*cette contree est l'une des moins connues de notre globe*,"* now thought to be the Havilah of Genesis x. ii.; the gold and silver of Arabia, according to the scriptures and ancient authors; the commercial splendor of Gherra, the modern Grane, its importance as described by classic and historic authors, and its harbor, as spoken of by Horsburgh, in his "*East India Sailing Directions*." The influence of the Arabians as descendants of Ishmael, under Mohammed, the Saracens, &c., now merged in the Ottoman Empire, has been well treated by Lewis Cheeseman, D.D.

Moreover, we have interesting statistics of the rapid increase of steam and sailing vessels on the Mediterranean, Indian and China Seas, as well as on the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, since the completion of those highways of nations—the railroads from Alexandria to Suez, and from Aspinwall to Pauama. These, in their growing influence, deserve the serious consideration of the merchant and the philanthropist.

Such are some of the subjects and localities which the want of space prohibits from being discussed in detail. A few extracts from different authors are given to illustrate their importance, but it is hoped that the intelligent reader will carefully investigate them.

* Geography of Abulfeda, according to Desvergers.

THE TELEGRAPH OF PROPHECY.

The following, extracted from a letter of a learned Jewish friend, is worthy of insertion:—"The Telegraph: Is it spoken of in Prophecy?" "The verse to which Dr. Cumming, in his recent work, the 'Great Tribulation,' alludes, is Daniel xii. 4, the concluding words of which are *Vatirbah haddengat*, 'and knowledge shall increase.' Dr. C. says there is another reading, in which the first word concludes with a B, instead of an H, which would give us the word *Vatirbat*. Suppose there exists such a reading, (which, however, is unknown to me,) it would be so obscure, and, properly speaking, so ungrammatical, that preference would be given to the ordinary text; for that 'other reading' would not mean 'and knowledge shall be flashed like the lightning flame,' but 'and knowledge shall shoot, fling, or hurl.'

"The ordinary reading of that word is the verb *Rabah*, the other reading would be *Rabab*."

This last verb is found connected with the word lightnings, in Psalm xviii. 14, from which it would seem the peculiar reading may have first originated. The writer goes on to say: "To me it appears preposterous, and far less plausible than other passages that have been supposed to allude to the telegraph, but which, I must confess, after careful examination, did not seem to me to justify such interpretations. There are, nevertheless, prophecies that indicate a time when the human race will be bound together by closer ties, and be able to communicate together with greater rapidity than even now seems possible; for instance, in Zachariah xiv., 16, Isaiah lxvi., 23."

About thirty-six years ago there was a monthly published in the city of New York, with the title of "*The Jew: being a defence of Judaism against all adversaries, and particularly against the insidious attacks of Israel's advocate*." Number 1, Vol II., bearing date 1st day of the 13th month, *Adar Shinee*, 5,584, is now before me, and, as my learned friend closes his letter referring to more rapid communication still future, with different parts of the world, I would ask the attention of your intelligent readers to a curious translation of Isaiah xl., 3, the examination of which takes

up a great portion of this number. When we consider the time this was written—the changes by the introduction of railroads since—the peculiar reading of this text and the difference between the Hebrew noun *Mysela*, Highway, in the *singular*, and the Greek translation by *Tribous*, Paths, in the plural, we are inquisitive. The questions arise—What is the cause of this difference between the Old and New Testaments? What other *readings* can be given of Isaiah xl., 3? Will some of your learned readers give us more light and information? Before quoting a couple of paragraphs, I would hint that there is a striking accordance with the views as given in the lecture, noticed in your paper of December 29th, 1859, of Captain Lynch, U. S. N., who, your readers will remember, commanded the expedition to the River Jordan and the Dead Sea.

“A voice crying in the desert, Clear ye the way of the Lord, prepare, in Arabia Deserta, an highway for our God.”—*Literal translation*. Isaiah xl., 3.

“The first difference in the literal translation is in the word (*Bangarba*), and which I render in *Arabia Deserta*; it is a word of several significations, according to the context. I have given it its original signification, supposing the context requires it, the radix is *Arab*, and it is applied to signify a desert, because Arabia is a desert country, a plain, sandy country; it has other significations, and is consequently differently translated *Solu Laroocheeb BANGAROBOTH*; ‘Extol him who rideth upon the Heavens.’ Psalms lxxviii., v. 4. But here the sense of the context would, if not require, at least allow its being rendered in *THE DESERT (of Arabia)*; for the Psalmist sings of his appearance on Sinai, in Arabia Deserta, Again, *Vatagel ARABIA*. Isaiah, c. xxxv., v. 1. And which the Bible has rendered, ‘And the *desert* shall rejoice;’ but why, I cannot perceive, for here again the context requires the word to be left as a proper noun, and *ARABIA shall rejoice*; being that its desert is to blossom as a rose. ‘It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of *THE LORD*, and the excellency of our God.’ Is. xxxv. 2. The deserts of Arabia will become a flourishing country, and in consequence the Arabians will rejoice, even with joy and singing, for Ishmael is to dwell in the presence of all his brethren, (Gen. xvi., 12); they also will, at the

restoration, become a flourishing people. Again, *Medereech HANGARABAI*s translated 'through the way of the plain,' (Deut. ii. 8;) but this is manifestly incorrect; for when they left Edom or Seir, they were in the desert of *Arabia*, for they were not allowed to go through Moab, and therefore they turned themselves, and instead of going North, in which direction their road lay, they went East, into the desert of *Arabia*; and so says *Jarchi*, 'We turned our faces from the North to go towards the East.'⁴ Again *Masa BANGARAB*, 'The burthen of *Arabia*.' (Is. xxi., 13.) And here *David Levy* is with me, for he says, 'This is *Arabia Deserta*, as also Is. xiii., 20, *Lo yaet Shem Arabe*, 'The Arabian shall not pitch his tent there.' I am aware that the word has other significations, but I contend this is its signification here, that the high-way here spoken of is to be in *Arabia Deserta*, and not in the wilderness of *Judea*.

"The next difference is in the word *Mysele*; this, with the translators of the Bible, I render an *Highway*. St. Matthew has it *THE PATH*, meaning, I suppose, a narrow foot-path, and it must be left to commentators, to explain how a Jew, whose vernacular tongue was Hebrew, could render *MYSELA* a *path*, the Hebrew word for which is *Horach*, the Hebraist will find it, Ps. xvii., 4, 'The *path* of the destroyer,' Gen. xix., 17, 'An adder in the *path*,' Ps. xvi., 'The *path* of life.' In all which places, and in innumerable others, the word is *Horach*, and may indeed mean a road, such as is made by continual wear, but not a worked, artificial road or highway; and *Mang gal* is also a path, Ps. xvii., 5, 'Thy path, cxl., 6, and innumerable others;' but the word *Mysele* only means a wide, artificial cast-up road or highway, as *Myseleth Sidi Kobas*, 'The high-way of the Fuller's field,' Is. vii., 3; 'And there shall be an high-way for the remnant of his people,' Is. xi., 16. Nay its very root *Salal*, to cast up, shows its meaning to be a cast-up, raised, artificial, if you please, *turnpike* road, and to no other will it apply, as *SALU SALU panu derech*, 'Cast up, cast up, prepare the way,' Is. lvii., 14; that is, plough the road on each side, and throw the ground in the centre; so that *Mysele* is such a road which is cast up and raised higher than the land adjacent, while a path is only worn plain, and is rather lower than the land contiguous thereto."

Since the above was written the following letter in the *London Daily News* has reached this country.

SYRIA—THE NEW ROAD BETWEEN DAMASCUS AND BEYROUT.

BEYROUT, December 22.

The traveller who might return to Beyrout to-day, would certainly not recognise the road between this and Damascus. From the town itself there now starts a macadamised, well-made road, on which omnibuses are plying as far as the pine forest, and on which European-looking carts are coming to and fro, laden with stones or other materials of construction. Arrived at the forest, the solitary looking, dirty, Oriental coffee shop, at which three or four silent Turks were generally to be found sipping their coffee and smoking their narghilees, will be missed, and he will find in its place a French Café de l'Europe, where the omnibuses, stop, together with one of those small, wooden huts for the omnibus timekeeper, which are to be seen in such number, all over Paris and its environs. Visitors brought to this spot by the omnibuses, may be counted by hundreds on week days, and by thousands on Sundays. Going beyond the forest, the traveller will enjoy an excellent well constructed highway, on which he may canter to the very top of the mountain as easily as on Rotten row.

All along the road will be found hundreds of native workmen, overlooked and directed by European overseers and engineers, busy as bees, cutting banks, breaking stones, blasting rocks, and constructing, where necessary, solid bridges, drains, and viaducts over such places as the nature of the ground renders necessary. On inquiry the traveller will find that all this is the work of a French company, who, without much talk, got their capital together, and are making a good high-road from Beyrout to Damascus, a distance of seventy miles, on which road they are, by Imperial firman, to be their own carriers. It is not yet a year since the first sod of the road was turned, and already the works, good solid work too, are advanced nearly to the top of the first ridge in Mount Lebanon. When the prospectus of the undertaking was issued, it was calculated that the road would cost twenty francs a metre; but they have found that even on the plain, where they had to pay high for ground, they have covered all expenses for fifteen francs a metre, and on the mountain it will cost them but five and a half.

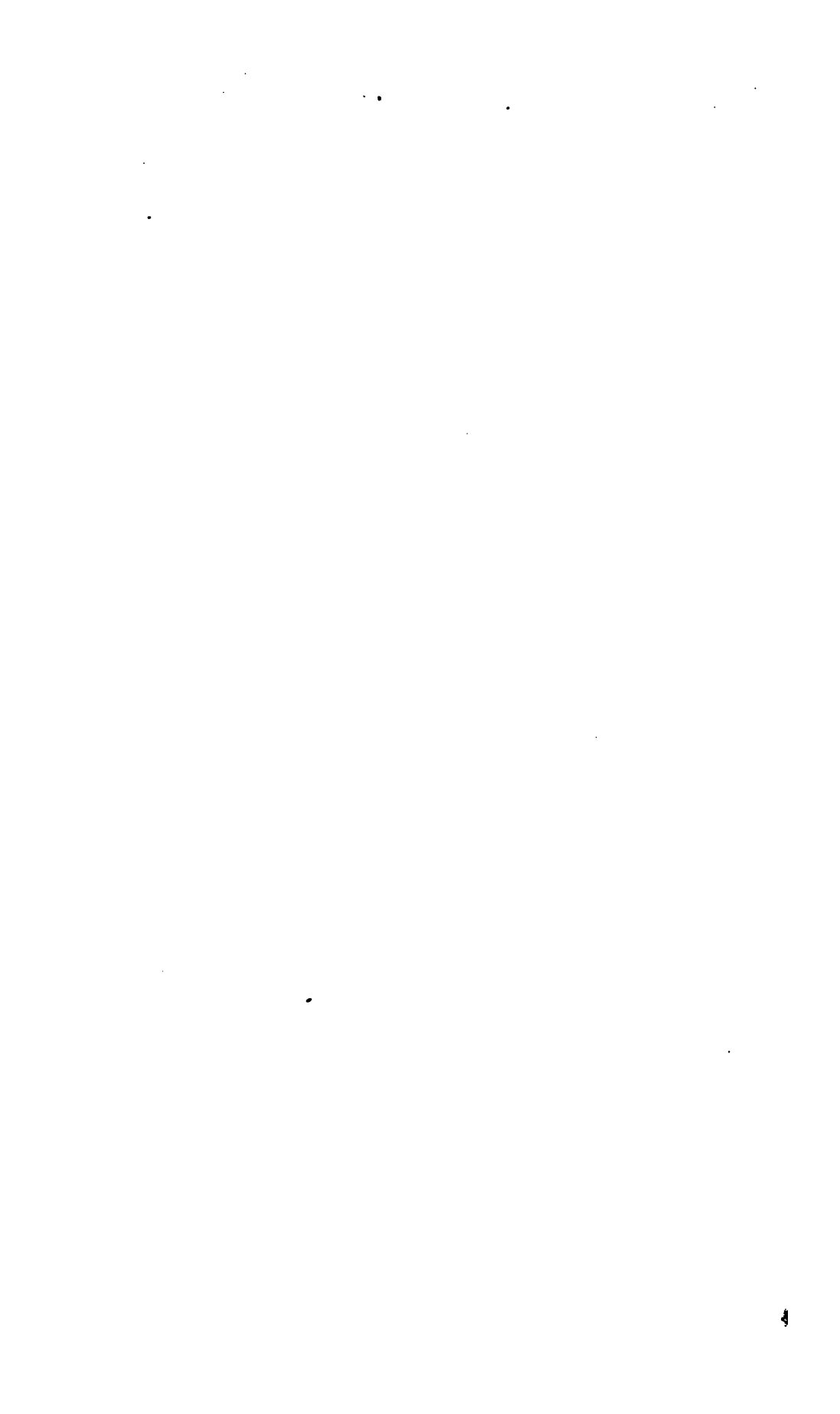
Moreover, the net proceeds of the omnibuses to and from the pine forest, serve to pay the expense of the daily laborers on the works, while the company, at the same time, thus break in and prepare the

horses that are to draw their diligences from Beyrout to Damascus. Besides being an excellent thing for those who have embarked their money on it, this undertaking will be very beneficial for the country through which it passes, and indeed for the whole province of Syria. Passing through the valley of Cœlo-Syria, it will open out vast corn-growing districts, all of which, owing to the expense of carriage to the coast, have been unable to export any portion of their produce, and therefore, have been hitherto unwilling to grow more than could be consumed in their own immediate neighborhood. Hitherto, owing to the delays, uncertainty, and expenses attendant upon bringing grain from the interior to Beyrout, little or no exports of corn have taken place, but, I am very much mistaken if, three years hence, it does not become one of the largest, if not the largest, port of export in any part of the Mediterranean Sea. For importers to Syria, the advantages of this road will also be very great indeed.

There is another fact to be considered. This carriage road will go from the shores of the Mediterranean Sea to Damascus, from whence, by the desert, any wheeled vehicle can go with perfect ease to within thirty miles of the shores of the Red Sea. Throughout this desert there are halting places, where water is found in plenty, even with rude means used by the local authorities and the Bedouin tribes. From Damascus to Mecca there proceeds every year the immense caravan of Moslem pilgrims, numbering its company by tens of thousands. May it not be in future that either we or the French, perhaps both, may find another road to India and the East, which will rival the present route through Egypt? At any rate, I look on this new road as the commencement of a most important movement, highly beneficial to the Turkish empire in general, and to Syria in particular.

Whilst making mention of the new road hence to Damascus, I quite forgot to remind you that until this was made, no such thing as a wheeled vehicle of any kind was known in Syria. Now omnibuses abound, carts for the purposes of the road, are also to be seen in numbers; there are several private carriages, and we are soon to have diligences for travellers on the road. It will be something of a novel sensation to travel in a revived old French diligence from the coast of Syro-Phœnicia over "that goodly mountain, Lebanon," to the city that is built on the rivers Abana and Pharpar, near which Paul was converted, and the beauty of which Mahomet extolled.















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